

Amendments to the Claims

Please amend the claims as follows.

1-35. (canceled)

36. (Currently amended) An amusement ride assembly comprising:
a rotatable endless loop cable spanning between end stations;
a drive system operable to rotate the loop cable;
a passenger carrier suspended from the cable, comprising by a roller mechanism having roller wheels that are rotatably engaged with the cable to enable the passenger carrier to free-roll along the cable and the passenger carrier further comprising an associated actuatable clamping mechanism to alternatively fix the passenger carrier to the cable; and
an electronic control system that is operable to actuate the clamping mechanism either automatically such that the control system actuates the clamping mechanism according to preset programming, or manually where an operator remote from the passenger carrier operates the control system to actuate the clamping mechanism, or both.

37. (Previously presented) An amusement ride assembly according to claim 36 wherein the control system is programmed to allow the passenger carrier to free-roll part way along the cable after initial release of the passenger carrier at the commencement of a ride and to then actuate the clamping mechanism to fix the passenger carrier to the loop cable when the passenger carrier has slowed down to less than a predetermined speed.

38. (Cancelled)

39. (Previously presented) An amusement ride assembly according to claim 36, wherein the control system is switchable between an automatic mode in which the control system controls movement of the passenger carrier along the cable according to programmed ride settings, and a manual mode in which an operator remote from the passenger carrier controls movement of the passenger carrier along the cable via the control system.

40. (Previously presented) An amusement ride assembly according to claim 36, wherein the control system comprises one or more sensors arranged to detect any one or more of the following: proximity of the passenger carrier to either of the end stations; actuation of the clamping mechanism; speed of the passenger carrier along the loop cable; and distance travelled by the passenger carrier along the loop cable.

41. (Previously presented) An amusement ride assembly according to claim 36 wherein the passenger carrier further comprises a swivel mechanism that is operable to rotate the passenger carrier about a substantially vertical axis.

42. (Previously presented) An amusement ride assembly according to claim 36 wherein the drive system is operable to rotate the cable in either direction, and wherein the control system is arranged to operate the drive system to rotate the loop cable in the direction the passenger carrier travels along the cable, at the same time as the passenger carrier travels along the cable.

43. (Cancelled)

44. (Previously presented) An amusement ride assembly according to claim 42, wherein the control system is arranged to actuate the clamping mechanism to fix the passenger carrier to the loop cable when the passenger carrier has slowed down to a speed which is substantially the same as the speed of the cable.

45. (Cancelled)

46. (Previously presented) An amusement ride assembly according to claim 36 comprising two passenger carriers, one carried on each side of the loop cable.

47. (Previously presented) An amusement ride according to claim 36 further comprising one or more intermediate stations located between the end stations and which support the cable

intermediate of its length.

48. (Currently amended) A method of providing an amusement ride comprising the steps of:

(a) loading a passenger carrier with one or more passengers, the passenger carrier being suspended from a loop cable by a roller mechanism having roller wheels that are rotatably engaged with the cable to enable the passenger carrier to free-roll along the cable and the passenger carrier further comprising an associated actuatable clamping mechanism to alternatively fix the passenger carrier to the cable;

(b) allowing the passenger carrier to free-roll under gravity along a span of [[a]] the loop cable from a position at or toward one station, toward another station;

(c) elampling actuating the clamping mechanism of the passenger to clamp the passenger carrier to the loop cable at a specific point intermediate of the distance between the two stations; and

(d) rotating the loop cable to move the passenger carrier further between the stations.

49. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 48 wherein step (c) further comprises the step of clamping the passenger carrier to the loop cable when the speed of the passenger carrier drops below a predetermined speed relative to the cable.

50. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 48 further comprising the step of rotating the loop cable in the same direction of travel as the free-rolling passenger carrier.

51. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 50 further comprising the step of clamping the passenger carrier to the loop cable when the speed of the free-rolling passenger carrier is substantially the same as the speed of the cable.

52. (Currently amended) An amusement ride assembly comprising a cascade of two or more stages, each stage comprising:

a rotatable endless loop cable spanning between two stations;

a drive system operable to rotate the loop cable, the ride further comprising: one or more passenger carriers, which can accommodate one or more passengers, attachable to the loop

cables of each stage; a suspension member which suspends the passenger carrier(s) to the loop cables, wherein the suspension member comprises a roller mechanism having roller wheels that are rotatably engaged with the cable to enable the passenger carrier(s) to free-roll along the loop cables and a clamping mechanism which can be actuated to alternatively fix the passenger carrier(s) to the loop cables; and an electronic control system that is operable to actuate the clamping mechanism either automatically such that the control system actuates the clamping mechanism according to preset programming, or manually where an operator remote from the passenger carrier(s) operates the control system to actuate the clamping mechanism, or both.

53. (Previously presented) An amusement ride assembly according to claim 52 wherein the passenger carrier(s) may transfer between loop cables of adjacent stages, and wherein a transfer station is provided between each stage to facilitate the transfer of the passenger carrier(s) between loop cables of adjacent stages.

54. (Cancelled)

55. (Previously presented) An amusement ride assembly according to claim 53, wherein one or more of the stations may form part of an adjacent stage.

56. (Currently amended) An amusement ride assembly comprising:

- a rotatable endless loop cable spanning between end stations;
- a drive system operable to rotate the loop cable;
- a passenger carrier suspended from the cable, comprising by a roller mechanism having roller wheels that are rotatably engaged with the cable to enable the passenger carrier to free-roll along the cable and the passenger carrier further comprising an associated actuatable clamping mechanism to alternatively fix the passenger carrier to the cable; and
- an electronic control system that is operable to actuate the clamping mechanism and which is programmed to allow the passenger carrier to free-roll part way along the cable after initial release of the passenger carrier at the commencement of a ride and to then actuate the clamping mechanism to fix the passenger carrier to the loop cable when the passenger carrier has slowed down to less than a predetermined speed.

57. (Currently amended) An amusement ride assembly comprising:

- a rotatable endless loop cable spanning between end stations;
- a drive system operable to rotate the loop cable;
- a passenger carrier suspended from the cable, comprising by a roller mechanism having roller wheels that are rotatably engaged with the cable to enable the passenger carrier to free-roll along the cable and the passenger carrier further comprising an associated actuatable clamping mechanism to alternatively fix the passenger carrier to the cable; and

an electronic control system that is operable to actuate the clamping mechanism and which is operable by an operator remote to the passenger carrier to allow the passenger carrier to free-roll part way along the cable after initial release of the passenger carrier at the commencement of a ride and to then actuate the clamping mechanism to fix the passenger carrier to the loop cable when the passenger carrier has slowed down to less than a predetermined speed.

58. (Previously presented) An amusement ride assembly according to claim 39 wherein the control system is arranged to switch from the automatic mode to the manual mode on detection of a fault.

59. (Previously presented) An amusement ride assembly according to claim 36 wherein the control system comprises a control module at each end station, and wherein the control modules are arranged to communicate via a radio link.

60. (Previously presented) An amusement ride assembly according to claim 59 wherein the control system further comprises a passenger carrier control module located on the passenger carrier that is arranged to generate control signals for actuating the clamping mechanism, and wherein the passenger carrier control module further comprises a radio transmitter/receiver for communicating with at least one end station control module and is arranged to actuate the clamping mechanism in response to signals received from an end station control module.

61. (Previously presented) An amusement ride assembly according to claim 36 wherein the control system comprises a passenger carrier control module located on the passenger carrier that

is arranged to generate control signals for actuating the clamping mechanism based on preset programming of the passenger carrier control module.